

The Christian Missionary Enterprise in China

A Critical Analysis of Religious Propaganda
in Regard to Its Educational
Significance.

A SPEECH DELIVERED AT
THE ORIENTAL STUDENTS CONFERENCE
TAYLOR HALL, RACINE, WISCONSIN
MORNING SESSION, SEPTEMBER 11, 1929

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PUBLISHED BY MRS. GEORGE BILLER
GENERAL DIRECTOR OF THE ORIENTAL STUDENTS CONFERENCE.



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THE CHRISTIAN MISSIONARY ENTERPRISE IN CHINA

A Critical Analysis of Religious Propaganda in Regard to Its Educational Significance

By Joshua W. K. Leo¹

If by education we mean "the impartation of one's knowledge or creed to another," religion is of paramount educational significance. Educationally, religion functions first in imparting the knowledge of its creed to man, next in persuading him to accept and practise the creed with faith, and finally in impelling him to propagate the creed among his fellowmen. Such a function remains the same whether the religion is national or universal. Christianity as one of the living universal religions, however, has from its very beginning striven to extend its "educational function" to foreign lands in order to convert peoples of different cultures and complexions to its creed. The active participants in such a world-wide enterprise have been known as "Christian missionaries" and their enterprise in China ought to be of no less educational significance than elsewhere. To attempt a critical estimate of their work hitherto done in that country, we must consider beforehand what ought to be the standard of estimation or the criterion of judgment. It is generally taken for granted, in our daily life, that the success or failure in any plan is to be determined by the correspondence or discrepancy between the actual effect and the original purpose. The Christian missionary enterprise in China is certainly not an exception to this objective rule. Therefore, in its estimation the degree to which the purposes of the Christian mission have been so far and so much fulfilled will form the basis of our principle of criticism. And yet the speaker is bound to be at a loss for an immediate answer if there is raised the question as to how far or how much the purposes of the Christian mission have been fulfilled in China. Because the Christian missionary enterprise there has been carried out through different agencies and in different ways. Accordingly, it is necessary to approach the problem from various different angles—historical, social, political, economical, intellectual or cultural, and finally religious—, for

1. The article as published in this pamphlet was substantially a speech delivered at the Oriental Students Conference, Taylor Hall, Racine, Wis., on September 11th morning, 1929. The speaker therein primarily endeavored to criticise the Christian missionary enterprise in China from the impartial standpoint and on the objective basis as described in the introductory part. He was born in November, 1905, of a Chinese Christian family which has been affiliated with the English Presbyterian Church in South China for many decades. In his early boyhood he was persuaded by his parents to study the Christian Bible and Chinese Classics simultaneously, and later he was educated in Christian mission schools for a number of years. He is now a graduate student at the University of Chicago, specializing in Philosophy with much side-interest in Law, Sociology, and Political Science. Though he is not a student of Christian Theology or Comparative Religion, he possesses by no means any preconception of Christianity or Christian missionaries or their work.

by doing this we expect to survey briefly but comprehensively what the Christian missionaries have done in China, to the Chinese and for the Chinese.

HISTORICALLY

The Christian missionaries seem historically to have claimed as their legal due the execution of the will of the Lord ever since the epoch-making testamental words were left on the Cross. The fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, which the Hebrews had conceived of as exclusively tribal or national, Jesus Christ proclaimed to be universal; and as over against the provincialism, legalism, and formalism, of the Pharisees and Sadducees, He preached the Gospel of universal love and equality, taught the ethics of self-sacrifice, advocated the morals of the Good Samaritan, and propounded the realization of the Kingdom of Heaven. As a result of His revolt against Judaism, He was condemned and crucified; and yet, from the top of the Cross, He still urged His disciples and followers to save peoples of all earthly nations by imparting to them His new creed. His heroic martyrdom immediately turned into the sole stimulant of His adherents, who have daringly set out on their evangelical enterprises all over the world. The basic motives back of the Christian missionary movement were thus originally unselfish.

Historically, there have been four periods in which Christianity was imported into China. Relations between the Roman and the ancient Celestial Empire began as early as the year 166 A. D. when the embassy sent by Emperor Marcus Aurelius Antoninus arrived at Loyang, then the Chinese capital. Their friendly terms had continued until the rise of Mohammedanism in the Middle Ages. Meanwhile, Christianity under the name of the Luminous Doctrine was first introduced to the Chinese by a Nestorian mission¹ under the leadership of the priest Alopen who in 635 reached Ch'angan, the capital city during the T'ang dynasty (618-907). In 636 they were allowed to settle in the city, and in 638 T'ai Tsung, the second Emperor of the T'ang dynasty, issued an imperial decree patronizing the newly imported religion. His son and successor, Kao Tsung, founded Nestorian monasteries. But, following the death of Kao Tsung, Empress Wu Tse T'ien, a fanatical Buddhist, oppressed the Nestorians. The famous Ming Hwang (713-755), the sixth Emperor of the same dynasty, sympathized with the Nestorians and ordered their ruined temples to be rebuilt. In the year 781, under the reign of Te Tsung, the ninth Emperor of the same dynasty, the well-known Nestorian Monument² was set up, the inscription on which gives in 2,036 Chinese characters a rough outline of the object and scope of the Nestorian faith together with an account of its relationships with the Chinese emperors and people in the previous one hundred and fifty years. While the

1. Dispatched by the followers of Nestorius (—c.451), the famous patriarch at Constantinople in the 5th century, who had flourished in Mesopotamia, Persia, Central Asia, and even the northwestern borders of India.

2. The monument had been buried since the middle of the 9th century after an imperial decree banishing the Nestorians until the year 1625 when it happened to be discovered by some workmen somewhere ten miles outside the city of Ch'angan.

Nestorians could flourish for more than two hundred years in China, the religion itself remained at the mercy of Chinese rulers. Towards the end of the Tang dynasty, as soon as it lost the emperor's sympathy once for all¹, it was doomed to complete extermination.

During the Yuan dynasty (1279-1367) which was established on Chinese soil by the famous Mongol emperor Kubilai Khan, grandson of Genghis Khan the Conqueror, European travellers, merchants, scientists and missionaries, found very much favor at the Mongolian imperial court. On the heels of Marco Polo (1254-1323), who arrived at Peking in the year 1271, there followed a number of Roman Catholic missionaries. It remains a matter of dispute whether Nestorianism still existed in China during the 13th century as Marco Polo narrates in his *Travels*. About the time when Marco Polo returned (in 1295) to Italy, the Franciscan mission began to extend the Catholic faith throughout China. In 1307 John of Montecorvino reached Peking and was appointed Archbishop by Pope Clement V. He was succeeded in the year 1333 by Nicholas, a professor of theology at the University of Paris. Though many of those Catholic missionaries were well-trained scholars and courageous religious workers, yet the creed they preached remained "alien" to the Chinese and could not have struck deep into their spiritual life so that eventually Christianity disappeared with the collapse of the Mongol rulers who had patronized the missionary enterprise for nearly a hundred years.

Down in the 16th century Christianity was for the third time introduced into China. In 1552 two Italian Jesuits landed at Canton, and were followed a year later by Matteo Ricci (1552-1610), who managed to gain for himself the intimate patronage of Shen Tsung, the thirteenth Emperor of the Ming dynasty (1368-1661). Because he had labored to adjust the teachings of the Gospel and the practices of the Church to Chinese life, he succeeded in converting to Christianity a number of scholars, officials, and even members of the royal family, among all of whom Tsu Kwang Ch'i² was the best-known champion of the Christian mission. Other missionaries, such as Johann Adam Schall von Bell and Ferdinand Verbiest, received much favor and esteem from the Ming emperors and the Chinese intelligentsia on account of their knowledge of Western mathematics and astronomy. These Jesuits permitted the then Chinese Christians to admit ancestor-worship into their liturgy. The Dominicans and Franciscans, however, presented to the Pope the question as to the admission of ancestor-worship among Christian rites for native converts. Both Popes Innocent X (1644-1655) and Clement XI (1700-1721) decided against the Jesuits, whereas in China the eminent Manchu Emperor K'ang Hsi (1662-1722), an earnest Confucianist,³ favored the Jesuits because of their admission of ancestor-worship and respect for Confucius. On the other hand a serious controversy arose among the missionaries as to the choice of Chinese words into which "God," "Lord," etc., were to be

1. In 845 Wu Tsung, the fifteenth Emperor of the dynasty, began to proscribe Buddhism and Christianity as well.

2. It is said that Zikawei, on the south of the city of Shanghai, was the home village of the Tsu family where we still find the present center of Jesuit education in China (v. Latourette, *A History of Christian Missions in China*, p. 95.)

3. Practically all the Manchu Emperors were orthodox Confucianists.

translated. Emperor K'ang Hsi then began (in 1706) to regard the missionaries as a source of political and intellectual annoyance in his Empire, and he and his successors alike were disgusted with the missionaries. Thus, as Professor Giles remarks¹, in this period the Roman Church had a real opportunity for the propaganda of Christianity in China and lost it. The failure was essentially due to the mutual denunciations and recriminations among the missionaries themselves.

In the fourth and present-day period Christianity has been introduced into China since both Catholic and Protestant missionaries began to follow on the heels of Western navigators, merchants, and soldiers to the Middle Kingdom in the early 19th century. The Catholics could hardly have retained their small communities in various sea ports in South China so long as Spanish, Portuguese, French, and finally Italian merchants were trading with the Chinese. The Protestant missionary activity in China started from the Dutch colonial and commercial expansion, although it did not prove successful. Actual Protestant work dates from the year 1807 when Robert Morrison of the London Missionary Society arrived in Canton. Morrison could not go and settle in the interior of China, but only remained in Macao, where he translated the Scriptures and compiled a great dictionary. American missions in China began with the arrival of David Abeel of the American Seaman's Friend Society and E. C. Bridgman of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions in Canton in 1830. Between 1842, in which the Nanking Treaty was concluded, and 1859 pioneer missionaries were active mainly in South China, and in 1859 there were 24 societies with 214 missionaries at work. After the Treaty of Tientsin of 1860, by which freedom to preach has been generally guaranteed, missionary expansion—both Catholic and Protestant—in North China took place. Many of the pioneers were courageous, patient, and intelligent. While with the exception of a few waterways the means of transportation and communication in China were then quite inconvenient and bandits and wild animals were roaming over steep mountains, deep valleys, and isolated rural communities, they preached the Gospel at the risk of their own lives, building churches, establishing schools, hospitals, and the like, and helping thousands of ignorant Chinese improve their ways of life. Moreover, they were patient of hardships in adopting Chinese livelihood wherever they went in the interior of the country. Before they began to participate in the evangelical work, they would have mastered the Chinese language or dialects, learned the custom and tradition of the people, and studied their culture and history. Therefore in preaching their mission they could easily make friends with the Chinese, both illiterate and intellectual.

Fortunate or unfortunate to say, some of the pioneer missionaries, with a view of avoiding troubles and hardships, not infrequently expected timely protections from soldiers or gunboats of their governments, and even desired the tumble-down Manchu Government to grant them extra-rights and privileges. In the course of time missionary work

1. Giles, *Confucianism and Its Rivals*, p. 249.

in China became less and less difficult; and since the Boxer rising in 1900 the Christian missionaries have enjoyed a number of exceeding advantages over the pioneers up to the year 1926 in which the Christian missionary work in the present-day China reached its climax of prosperity.

The Christian missionary work was bound to fail in the past three periods, mainly because the religious creed of Christianity as preached by the missionaries which remained inadaptably to Chinese thought could not have struck deep into the spiritual life of the people. Missionary propaganda always sought the favor of the Chinese Government and as a consequence its vitality was retained at the mercy of the rulers of the country. The missionaries themselves, whether Nestorians or Catholics, seemed unable to harmonize the imported foreign religion with the traditional Chinese culture. On the social and cultural life of the Chinese they made no impression. They could win the emperor's sympathy but failed to gain for themselves the favor of the masses of the people. If the Christian missionary work in China proved to be a failure in the past three periods at all, the question immediately arises as to whether Christianity as a religion will from the present day flourish permanently on Chinese soil. The answer to such a question may be foreshadowed through different kaleidoscopes if it can not be foretold, in what the Christian missionaries have done in China, which we are going to investigate in the following.

SOCIALLY

Bertrand Russell in his **Problem of China** (p. 207) distinguishes three motives of Westerners who go to China—to fight, to make money, and to convert the Chinese to Christianity—among which the last mentioned alone can claim altruistic character, as it appears to me. It is those who go to convert the people to Christianity that constitute the object of our study herewith concerned. It must be made clear, however, that most Christian missionaries now resident in China, unlike the adventurous pioneers who had managed to preach the Gospel among the Chinese up to the end of the 19th century¹, have many substantial advantages over their predecessors, and that it is these newcomers—forming an overwhelming majority of the present total number—that we are interested in. The Western youths determined to go abroad as missionaries are, on the whole, full of progressive spirit. Intellectually, practically all of them are college graduates equipped with sufficient social as well as academic knowledge. However, most of them seem not to possess enough specific knowledge before they set out to work. We can hardly discriminate between the missionaries bound for Africa and those going to China. For those missionaries in Africa some geographical and anthropological knowledge may be sufficient; but the missionaries preaching the Gospel among the Chinese must know not only what China is geographically and what the Chinese are anthropologically but also what China has been historically and

1. There still remain at present a number of such adventurous pioneers in rural districts who dare to push the way of the Gospel through all difficulties.

culturally and what the Chinese have been socially and intellectually. Granting the Chinese language to be too difficult for foreigners to learn in their own countries, they must before they leave for China read some books connected with China and the Chinese in order to have their minds prepared for coming into actual contact with the people. As a matter of fact they do not: many of them know not more than twenty Chinese proper names and possess a very vague impression of China and the Chinese which they get in the streets or from some occasional news.¹

Missionaries supported by the mission boards usually come from within their own churches which consider them as appropriate for the evangelical work. However, their conception of "competency" is too general. It may apply to their own country but not to a foreign country. Many young people may be good preachers and religious workers in their own country but not in foreign countries. Sometime in order to increase the number of missionaries they dispatch abroad, they may post the advertisement of their want on the church or even the school bulletin board¹, without questioning if the volunteers thereby recruited will fulfill their expectation. No wonder that many young missionaries, whether they have much social experience with their own people or not, are encountered in China with many difficulties in adapting themselves to the social environment thereof.

Having taken it for granted on account of their imagination that the Celestial Empire inhabited by a civilized people for five thousand years must be full of encouragements and enjoyments, they may suddenly become disappointed as soon as they land at Shanghai where they find impoverished rikishawmen wandering about the streets and the shops and factories crowded with uneducated people. In the absence of any immigration law they can land wherever they like, and privileged with extra-rights and protected by their gunboats they will settle at any city or town. We must now consider how they adjust themselves in facing so many strange Chinese who are different from them in religion, language, and custom.

The immediate social policy that appeals to them is that of isolation—to avoid coming into intimate contact with the Chinese multitudes—which is reaffirmed all the more because many of them have to spend one or a couple of years exclusively among themselves in the in the so-called language school.² They live in groups and outside of the headquarters of their religious propaganda they seldom associate with the natives socially except those who are highly educated in Western ways. Apparently they make a caste of themselves³ which never exists among the native Chinese. Their Chosen People for the Promised Land with whom they socially deal, are a small minority of the people and not socially typical Chinese. They are either the intelli-

1. The speaker was once an eye-witness of these facts.

2. It could be found in 1926 in five cities, i. e. Peking, Shanghai, Nanking, Chengtu, and Canton.

3. Though it may be contended that their isolation from the Chinese masses results from the Chinese race prejudice, yet it must be noticed that, while the pioneers could have attempted close contact with the inaccessible Chinese in the 19th century, the new comers must have more possibility to make friendly terms with the people who have turned open-hearted to foreigners since they were awakened from their "bigoted slumber" decades ago.

gentsia and social workers once educated in Western countries or young people whose social ideal and behavior are permeated with Western mores. The great bulk of the population seems to be wholly ignored.

It must be admitted that they have at any rate contributed quite a great deal to the campaign of Chinese social workers against bad customs, such as foot-binding, opium-smoking, and polygamy, and that they have rightfully advocated free choice in marriage, equality between the sexes, and greater sympathy with the poor. But their service in relief and social reform is too theoretical as their understanding of the whole population is frequently arbitrary on account of isolation. On the ground of the hasty generalization that any custom which is traditionally Chinese is socially pathological, some missionaries even seemingly attempt to substitute all Chinese ways of life with Western mores while a few others believe that the Chinese, instead of being occidentalized, will sooner or later combine the best customs of the Westerners and their own. As a matter of fact it is not the missionaries but the Chinese themselves who can decide the alternative between "combination" and "substitution."

While they live in isolation, if the period of their residence is long enough, they might come to acquire a better and better understanding of the Chinese.¹ Many a missionary is so impatient that after his shortest term elapses he returns home once for all, and the information about China which he gives to his people can be only half-baked though not wholly wrong. The fictitious description of his experience in China not infrequently gives rise to many kinds of misconception of the Chinese which obtain in Western countries. His interpretation of China to the Occident is usually imperfect and possibly misleading. For instance, he may tell his people at home that polygamy prevails among the non-Christian Chinese as among the Mormons without further explaining how it originated and why it had not been abolished until recent time. Both isolation and misunderstanding breed contempt and prejudice. If his critical insight were not overwhelmed by and saturated with what Francis Bacon calls the "idols of the mind"—namely, all sorts of racial, personal, conventional, and traditional, deceptive tendencies—he could easily inquire into all peculiar Chinese social phenomena with his scientific eyes.

Socially, however, there must not be overlooked a distinction between the Catholic and the Protestant missionaries in China. Generally speaking, the Catholics do not isolate themselves so much from the popular multitudes as the Protestants do. While many Protestant missionaries are mainly interested in the broadcast advertisement of their projects and plans and deal with highly educated Chinese in their religious propaganda, most Catholics start with native assistants from the education and conversion of the illiterate masses of the Chinese people.

In short, the Christian missionary work in China is socially a failure rather than a success if it is supposed to conform to its educational significance. Because most of the social purposes of the Chris-

1. Many a pioneer who has acquired a good and clear understanding of the people, prefers to spend his whole life among them whom he has loved and served so much.

tian mission are not fulfilled yet. The universal conception of the fatherhood of God is upheld in the air, that of the brotherhood of man is "restricted" to a "privileged" few. No Kingdom of Heaven can be established between any two peoples so long as the one is isolated from the other. Some missionaries can not be so called "missionaries," because they seem to have no "mission" at all. Unfortunately many Chinese in China misjudge the whole Christian missionaries by such "pseudo-missionaries" just as many Americans misjudge the Chinese by their worst representatives in this country. Yet such is due to universal human nature whether in Nanking and Shanghai or in Chicago and New York. As to the remedial measures against such an undesirable consequence, it may be the most immediate way for the mission board to improve the quality of the missionaries instead of increasing their number.¹

POLITICALLY

The same is true politically. Politically the Christian missionary enterprise cannot claim to be a success in the light of the Christian mission. Instead of promoting, first of all, an international good will between China and the Christian nations, the missionary activity has been a chief source of international complications. By this I do not mean that missionaries have intentionally caused the Chinese Government troubles and difficulties, but that, in the present status of international affairs those foreign powers which have been devoted to the exploitation of the Chinese people and natural resources, have skilfully and cunningly taken advantage of the Christian missionary activity in demanding extra-rights for their residents in China and in compelling the Chinese Government to sign up unequal treaties. The missionaries, being citizens of their respective nations, can not help this: the happening of such complications has seemed inevitable so long as their Governments never abolish their aggressive foreign policy towards the Chinese. Nevertheless, on the other side, we may say that, while in the past three periods, the missionaries in China were patronized by the Chinese Government, in the present-day period they are sanctioned by their own Governments which are primarily interested in the execution of their exploitation plans regardless of the welfare of the Chinese people.

Since the previous century, as we have remarked, the missionaries have followed Western soldiers and merchants to China. Their way was mainly paved by merchants and the obstacles on the way were cleared up by soldiers. When delegates of Western nations suddenly crowded into China decades ago, Chinese statesmen² could not under-

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1. They say that the missionary in China gets less pay, than he would in professional work in his home land, which, however, is quite liberal to maintain comfortable livelihood since the cost of living in China is much less expensive than in most Western countries, but out of which he cannot save as much as he can do at home. This may be why those people used to high pay do not like to go to China as missionaries. If the mission board wants to improve the quality of missionaries, it may have to increase their pay and reduce their number.
 2. While as oral contract is as effective as a written one among themselves, most of them were too simple-minded to disprove their traditional immediate inference that the concessions made to foreigners which they regarded as "gratuitous" would inevitably be recovered or revoked in friendly ways as soon as the term of 25 or 99 years expired.

stand the "monkey-business" of the European diplomats at the first glance, which was the underlying cause of their diplomatic failure. Traditionally the Chinese soldiers have never been skilful in the technique of "homicide"—to quote a juristic term—so that they have been unable to resist against outside invaders for nearly a century. Consequently reparations, territorial cessions, and conclusions of unequal treaties, have been the main events in the recent Chinese diplomatic history. Since the conclusion of the Nanking Treaty of August 29, 1842, with which the First Opium War with Great Britain ended, extrarights have repeatedly been demanded for foreigners generally and missionaries in particular. In November, 1897, Germany siezed Tsintao and occupied almost the whole Shantung Peninsula on the pretext of the murder of two German missionaries by Chinese bandits who were later arrested and executed by Chinese authorities. The rights granted by the Manchu Government to foreign missionaries to preach Christianity, to build churches and hospitals, to rent or build houses and open burial grounds, are legally guaranteed by the Treaties with:¹

Great Britain in 1842.

Russia in 1851 and 1858.

France in 1858.

U. S. A. in 1858 1868 and 1903.

Germany in 1861.

Denmark in 1863.

Spain in 1864.

Belgium in 1865.

Italy in 1866.

Portugal in 1887.

These Treaties, signed by the Manchus with the Westerners, have been since the overthrow of the Manchu dynasty in 1912 as much in force as before. The same rights were equally demanded by the Japanese Government as late as 1915 in the last clause of the famous Twenty-One Demands, whereas there have been dipatched no Japanese missionaries to China.

The present Chinese Nationalist Movement has been challenging all the unequal treaties with a view to abolish them completely. As most of them are intimately connected with the problem of religious propaganda, the Chinese anti-imperialistic demonstration is very liable to ferment an anti-missionary or even anti-Christian tendency in the same orientation. When a British missionary once excommunicated a Chinese Christian who could not quit smoking opium, immediately the local Chinese—Christian as well as non-Christian—contended that instead of excommunicating the Chinese Christian who had the habit of opium-smoking the British missionaries must unanimously request their Government not to allow the opium-trade of the British subjects with the Chinese. As many patriotic Chinese even condemn Christian missionaries as "tools of imperialism," especially so when they saw that the Japanese, who have never sent Christian missionaries to China,

1. *The China Year Book*, 1928, p. 486.

made a superfluous demand for their presumptive missionaries among the number "twenty-one." Many missionaries who have deeply sympathised with the Chinese emphatically reinforce China's "Rights Recovery Movement" and advocate to their respective Governments the abolition of the unequal treaties concluded with China. Certain Protestant missionaries in China have in recent years publicly declared their renunciation of protection by their governmental authorities—e. g. gunboats, soldiers, consulates and the like¹.

Whether the motive of these missionaries to renounce governmental protection is sincere or superficial, it is impossible, as a matter of practice, for their respective Governments to quit sending soldiers or gunboats to safeguard their subjects resident in China. The significance of a Christian missionary in the eyes of the British King or American President is not the same as that in the eyes of Jesus Christ. Christian religion advocates the ethics of self-sacrifice, whereas modern politics encourages self-assertion as much as self-maintenance. No government will allow any portion of its subjects to become outlaws unless they become naturalized as full citizens of the land to which they go. What is left for the Christian missionaries to do politically and religiously in a harmonious way while they remain citizens of their homelands is (1) to cultivate an everlasting good will between the Chinese and their peoples at home, (2) to enable the Chinese masses to treat foreigners in the proper manner by imparting to them the custom and tradition of the West, and (3) to convince their Governments of the necessity and propriety of treating the Chinese on an internationally equal basis as well as changing their traditional foreign policy towards China.

The conflict between religion and politics is encountered by Chinese Christians and Western missionaries alike. As a rule, religion has always been subordinated to political causes so far as the missionaries can not successfully interfere with the foreign policy of their Government while their Government is anxious to take advantage of their activities in China. Nevertheless, some educational missionaries have attempted to prohibit their students while they are in school from participating in any political movement, as they ignore the fact that in the present-day China students and young people have been for many decades the centripetal and centrifugal forces of the Chinese Nationalist Movement. The best instance of the collision between foreign Christian teachers who do not favor students' participation in political activities and Chinese students who are eager to join patriotic demonstration, can be cited from the break-up of St. John's University at Shanghai in June, 1925, which had been the most famous and efficient Christian institution in China, maintained by the American Epis-

1. Tan Shao-Hwa, "Spontaneous Renunciation of Governmental Protection by certain Missionaries in China," *China Weekly Review*, Jan. 26, 1929 (vol. XL VII, no. 9), pp. 364-366. "In 1924 a number of American missionaries in China," writes Mr. Tan, "caused to be circulated a statement for signature, in which the signers expressed their 'earnest desire that no form of military pressure be exerted to protect us or our property; that in the event of our capture by lawless persons or death at their hands, no money be paid for our release, no punitive expedition be sent out, no indemnity exacted.' This circular attracted a great deal of attention from missionary circles in America and called forth a lot of comments, some of which were by no means sympathetic." (*Ibid.*, p. 364)

copal Church up to that date. Since the downfall of St. John's¹, many other mission schools—such as the University of Nanking (Union), Shanghai College (Northern and Southern Baptists), Yenching University (Union), Canton Christian College (Independent), etc.—, have decisively assumed the liberal or indifferent policy towards the students' participation in political activities. It is the same argument advanced by Chinese students in all mission schools that their foreign Christian teachers have no right to interfere in their patriotic work unless they succeed in disposing of the foreign policy of their imperialistic Government towards China.

Thus, the Bible has been protected by gunboats; the Christian missionaries privileged with extra-rights, while preaching the Gospel of universal love and equality, cannot help practising domination as their soldiers and merchants do. The Chinese opposition to the missionary enterprise is not without concrete ground. It is not totally fair for the missionaries to ascribe all sorts of anti-Christian or anti-missionary demonstration to the instigation by Russian Bolsheviks and radical Chinese. The indigenous Nationalist Movement has already awakened the Chinese people—both Christian and non-Christian—to the state of full self-consciousness. To every Chinese patriot it is his or her duty to protest against the unequal treaties as well as against the aggressive policy of foreign Governments.

ECONOMICALLY

In the economical aspect and through various financial agencies the Christian missionary work in China is successful in so far as many purposes of the Christian mission—such as famine relief, rescue of the sick and the poor, education of the rising generations, guidance of the ignorant, etc.—have been achieved largely by financial means. While some writer² regards missions as the great single American investment in China, if missions in China can be called an investment at all, the investment must be a "financially unproductive" one. Whether their Governments and capitalists exploit the Chinese or not, the mission boards and missionaries who spend a tremendous amount of time and money in their evangelical work in China receive no financial profits in return from the Chinese.³ To impart their creed to others by practising the creed themselves is the best policy of education and religious propaganda, and this is what Jesus Christ expects every follower of His to do. The financially "communistic" teachings involved in the religious creed of Christ, though they are oriented on different grounds as contrasted with the principles of Bolshevism, have thus been imparted to non-Christians by means of economic generosity.

The missionary work in China has assumed for main forms—

1. St. John's continued its regular work in the fall of 1925, but it did not retain its full enrollment.

2. Cf. Wilbur Burton, "Critical View of Christian Missionary Results," *China Weekly Review*, July 6, 1929 (Vol. XLIX, no. 6), pp. 242-244.

3. Catholic missions, however, depend for most of their income upon investments in China which are usually made in real estates. (v. Latourette, loc. cit., p. 830.)

namely, direct propaganda, education, medicine, and advertisement—through four agencies—namely, the church, the school, the hospital, and social organizations including the Y. M. C. A., Y. W. C. A., charity clubs, etc.—the establishment of any of which needs much money and labor. As Western Christians have materially profited by the progress of science since the last few centuries, it is the best way of disposing of their surplus wealth and surplus energy for their evangelical activities in countries where people are suffering from poverty and misery of all sorts. To spend billions of marks in the World War and have millions of promising young men killed in battle-fields under the will of a single person is an act of brutality, whereas to spend surplus energy and wealth for the Christian mission in foreign lands is an act of humanity. It is far more reasonable and justifiable for the American people to establish churches, schools, or hospitals, in China, than to lend billions of dollars to the Russians who have not as yet returned a single cent. And yet by no means do the Christian Chinese want to depend upon foreign support financially; they just feel obliged to foreign Christians for their presents and contributions.

The climax of the Christian missionary work in China was reached by the beginning of 1926.¹ In that year there were in China 8,000 Protestant missionaries²—5,000 of them being American—and 2,000 Catholic priests—half of them American. There were 120 Protestant denominations³, and the American Protestant investments at that time amounted to \$80,000,000 and annual American contributions had ranged from \$10,000,000 to \$15,000,000. As to the Catholic missionary work,⁴ there were 56 bishoprics, and over 2,900 foreign missionaries, representing the Orders of Jesuits, Lazarists, Franciscans, Augustinians, Salesians, Dominicans, etc.⁵ In the same year there were supported 7,000 of all kinds of mission schools which had altogether 300,000 students. Out of the 55 well-organized colleges and universities in China, 27 were established by foreign missionaries and have derived their funds largely from the mission boards abroad. The small Ginling College (exclusively for women) in Nanking has needed an annual budget of about \$39,000, and the approximate value of its property is \$460,925.⁶ Yet with several palatial buildings on its elegant campus it accommodates not more than 150 students.

In the year 1925 among all the Chinese city Y. M. C. A.'s 36 carried educational work with a total enrollment of 22,685 students. Almost every mission school for boys has its school Y. M. C. A.; in the co-educational institution you find both Y. M. C. A. and Y. W.

1. Cf. Burton, *loc. cit.*, p. 242. During 1926 and 1927, while the Chinese Nationalists' "northern drive" was advancing, many missionaries evacuated once for all, and schools and churches and hospitals closed. It is a matter to be decided in the future whether it can be legitimately stated that the Christian missionary work in China has declined ever since the beginning of the Nationalists' recent northern expedition in 1926.

2. There have been about 10,000 Chinese evangelists.

3. At present there are about 4,500 Protestant missionaries among whom 2,700 are Americans 107 church organizations, and 450,000 Chinese Protestant communicants who have financially contributed to the support of churches and schools as a matter of course.

4. There are in China about 2,400,000 Chinese Catholics.

5. *The China Year Book*, 1928, p. 482.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 505

C. A. (e.g. in Shanghai College and Yenching University); otherwise the two are merged in what they call S. C. A. (e.g. Students' Christian Association in the former Canton Christian College). As to the number of Y. W. C. A.'s, there were in the same year 13 city associations with a membership of 3,000 and 86 student associations with 5,800 members. Both the Y. M. C. A. and Y. W. C. A., however, have from the outset been predominantly Chinese both in leadership and in financial support.

There are nowadays about 300 hospitals and 200 dispensaries. Medical missionaries in China have afforded very much help to the Chinese in introducing Western medical treatment, preventing contagious diseases, and suppressing pestilence of any sort. Moreover, they assist Chinese social workers in reducing illiteracy and educating the ignorant as well as in famine relief or opium rescue work.

So far all the concrete contributions the Christian missionaries have made and the work they are doing by financial means apparently prove their practice of the morals of the Good Samaritan. However, while the Good Samaritan saved the life of the poor victim on the wayside not out of any motive for honor or reward but purely for mercy's sake, once in a while some missionary may boast before his people of his Good Samaritan exploits in China, and one step further, without any critical investigation of the present chaotic social situation of the people, he may come to condemn the Chinese bulk as morally too egotistic. Far be it from the poor victim on the wayside to look to any such an hypocritical Samaritan for charity!

Nevertheless, it must be remembered that even at present many Chinese evangelical agencies—churches, schools, etc.—are either financially or intellectually independent of foreign support. In South China many Chinese Christians are quite well-to-do, and therefore most churches are independent and quite a number of schools are supported by Chinese Christians. The same is true of those in prosperous cities in Central and North China. When some day industry flourishes and natural resources are well developed under the auspices of the Central Government, the Chinese Christians profited thereby will no doubt spend their surplus wealth and energy for missions.

INTELLECTUALLY

Intellectually the mistakes committed by the Christian missionaries can be fairly compensated by their substantial contributions. Their various efforts to introduce Western culture, thought, as well as religion, deserve appreciation rather than condemnation. It is unwise, of course, for some of them to expect that in the long run they can completely occidentalize the Chinese by imparting to them Western religious creed, scientific knowledge, philosophic thought, and social manners.

The first thing done by the missionaries which we must deal with is translation. The authorized translation of the New Testament

was completed in 1850; and that of the Old Testament in 1855.¹ As there are prevailing among the Chinese people different dialects besides the standard language—particularly in South China—, the Bible has been translated into all the dialects, and the missionaries there have employed Roman letters to write them out. While they do not understand Chinese characters and Chinese Christians do not understand their language, they have to teach the Bible by means of spelling Chinese words with the Roman alphabet.² Such a compromise, however, cannot be appreciated by the Chinese intelligentsia and particularly the literati. Therefrom immediately arises the necessity that the Bible must be taught in written or classical Chinese—which is common to all Chinese—or in some European language. In most mission schools some Western language—usually either English or French—has been taught as soon as they are established.³ The missionary's interest in translation, however, at least encourages many Chinese to translate Western books and Western scholars to translate Chinese books.

Unlike the Japanese, the Chinese do not believe in the efficacy of translation to any considerable extent, because their language is different in structure and function from any foreign language. They prefer to study the language beforehand in order to understand the culture, thought, or religion of any outside people. It is eventual that the more missionaries there are in China, the more opportunities the Chinese have of mastering Western languages, the more so when the missionaries establish schools for Chinese students. Even in the institution established by the Chinese Government or by private citizens there are usually several foreign teachers some of whom are often missionaries spending part of their time in the non-Christian school.

Educational work started by missionaries has had considerable influence upon the reform of the traditional Chinese system of education. As early as the year 1852 Roman Catholics founded a college somewhere in the Canton province for the education of native priests after they had built up primary and high schools. Meanwhile they came to admit non-Christians into all of their schools. The Protestant missions soon followed the example, but they have admitted both Christian and non-Christian students from the beginning. At present there are, as we have already remarked, 27 mission colleges and universities in China, among which three are Catholic and nine Protestant ones are run by unions of different denominations. Eleven out of these twenty-seven are co-educational; eleven are exclusively⁴ for men, and the other five are for women.⁵

In the mission college, either British or American, the textbooks

1. Latourette says that by 1819 Robert Morrison had completed the translation of the whole Bible (*Op. cit.*, p. 212).

2. Such a method has prevailed particularly among the missionaries in Fukien, Formosa, Kwantung, Kwangshi, Kweichow, and Yunnan.

3. In a certain theological seminary in South China, for many decades the British teachers never taught Chinese students the English language simply because one of its early graduates had once complained in an English letter to the mission board of some "pseudo-missionaries."

4. As a matter of fact, some institutions like the University of Nanking and Ginling College are nominally "exclusively" for men only or for women only, and admit students of the other sex as visiting students.

5. *The China Year Book*, 1928, p. 520 ff.

on science, Western literature, history, art, philosophy, and religion. are standard college text-books published mostly in America. If the instructor is English or American, the class is always conducted entirely in English; if he is a Chinese, then both Chinese and English are simultaneously used while the class is going on. Of course, lectures, reports and papers must be expressed exclusively either in Chinese or in English. In the classes of Chinese subjects Chinese is exclusively used. As a result of this, the student is well trained in the command of the two languages at the same time, and when he comes to America or England he does not find much handicap in the matter of language and other subjects, the more so because all the mission schools, with the exception of the Catholic ones, have adopted the educational system prevailing in Anglo-American countries. As the Chinese parents do not like to have their children educated entirely in the English language and maners, all the mission schools emphasize more and more Chinese subjects and Chinese ways of life.

Recent changes in the Chinese educational system were essentially motivated by the desire of the Chinese to study Western learning after they had come into intimate contact with Westerners and particularly with missionaries. Yung Wing (1828-1912), the first Chinese student who departed from China in 1847 for further study, had been educated in the Morrison School, the first English mission school in China, opened in 1839.¹ After he returned from the United States to China in 1854, he presented four proposals to the Government, one of which was urging the Government to send selected Chinese students abroad for Western training. For the first time the Government sent thirty students to the United States in 1872 and in the following few years.² But it never attempted to reform the educational system at home. After the Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895) Chang Chih Tung wrote the famous book on **China's Only Hope** in which he strongly advocated a reform of the traditional educational system in China. The proposition was reenforced by a group of early reformers headed by K'ang Yu Wei, Yuan Shih Kai, Sun Yat Sen,³ Liang Ch'i Ch'ao, etc. The reactionary Manchu Empress Dowager was opposed to the new schemes and condemned the proposals as well as many of the reformers in the year 1898. After the Boxer rising took place in 1900, the Manchu Government adopted Chang Chih Tung's views in 1902. The old system of civil service examination was abolished in 1905. When regulations were issued for the reform of the old system of education, most young people who could meet the new demands were American or English trained scholars, and a number of them had once been educated in mission schools or had for a long while associated with missionaries most of whom were Americans. Consequently, the American

1. Tsi C. Wang, **The Youth Movement in China**, New York, New Republic, p. 44 ff.

2. These students were recalled home in 1881 by the Chinese authorities fearing lest they should be Americanized, as they had learned that some of the boys were good baseball players and some others experts in Western etiquette, dance and music.

3. Dr. Sun Yat Sen, through close association with Protestant missionaries, perceived in the early Eighteen Nineties—chiefly from the conservatism of Li Hung Chang—that the reconstruction of China could not be initiated by any remedial measures unless the Manchu Government was overthrown; thereby he turned thenceforth from a reformer into a revolutionist.

educational system was adapted to the Chinese, and at present Chinese education is conducted largely under the sway of what we may call "the Columbia School" composed of numerous Chinese graduates from the Columbia University Teachers College. The reformers followed the example of Yung Wing in advocating the Government to send students abroad. For such measures the missionaries and their schools have to a great degree facilitated the students to study abroad in all respects as well as increasing their opportunities to learn Western languages.

Moreover, mission schools as well as the Y. M. C. A. and the Y. W. C. A. have rendered much service to the Chinese Association for the Advancement of Mass Education—in fighting illiteracy and establishing demonstration farms among the peasants in rural districts. By lectures, posters, and lantern slides, medical missionaries encourage the prevention and suppression of contagious diseases, the promotion of vaccination against small-pox, the use of sunshine, medical soup, filtered water among the uneducated masses.

Practically all the mission schools had been headed by foreigners and controlled by the mission boards up to the time when the Nationalist Government began (roughly in 1926) to enforce the immediate points of its educational policy, one of which it has been to nationalize all schools including mission and private schools whatsoever. A number of mission schools faced many difficulties in adjusting themselves to the new situation. Thus, St. John's University, in order to avoid further complications, had closed from the beginning of 1927 until the fall of 1928; Yale-in-China, Lingnan University, and Central China University, had to close for some time, too. However, the mission schools at present have Chinese principals or presidents, and foreign faculty members are retained either as teachers or advisors but not as dictators. All religious subjects which the students had been compelled to take are now optional courses to them. The students are no longer requested to attend the daily or Sunday service. Despite so many concessions made as the above-mentioned, better consequences are secured nowadays than before. The non-Christian students are contented with their school work: no students read books, reports, letters, or romances, during the chapel service which they are voluntarily attending, as they would have done in those days when they were compelled to be present at what they regarded as the most disgusting assembly in their college course; and many students are very much willing to take the Bible classes offered on Sunday morning so as to get some extra credits.¹

Finally, it is worth noticing that many a writer has repeatedly congratulated the Christian missionaries in China on their influence—nay, inspiration—to many eminent Chinese leaders, political, social, intellectual, military, as well as religious. It must be admitted as a matter of course that many such historic figures, in their thought, work, ways of life, just as in their reform of the traditional Chinese educational system, have practised many social teachings involved in Christian

1. This has been true particularly at the University of Nanking whose policy has been extraordinarily elastic and adaptable and quickly responsive to changes in its environment whether social or political or intellectual.

religion whether they have had intimate contact with Christian missionaries or not. Yet it is too much exaggerated to conclude, if I am not wrong, that the missionary influence is the sole factor underlying the appearance of them among the present-day Chinese. There are in China many great personalities who have never come in contact with Christian missionaries. While they remain non-Christian, they sympathize with Christian missionaries and communicants none the less. Just as the Christian Chinese serve their nation and people as the non-Christian do, so many of the non-Christians are as much interested in religious work as the Christians are.

RELIGIOUSLY

The Christian missionary movement in China at present, as it was in the past, is the religious aspect of the impact of Western culture upon Chinese life. As we have seen, it was bound to fail in the past three periods in which the Gospel of Jesus Christ was introduced into the soil of the Middle Kingdom, and at the present critical moment its destiny seems "indeterminable" yet. The Christian missionary's work in China is still in the making: it is too early nowadays to condemn or to admire. As to the prospects of the evangelical work, Chinese Christian leaders have repeatedly announced before the world peoples that it is not the foreign missionaries but the Chinese Christians themselves who can determine the future of Christianity in their own country. But it is rather too optimistic in inferring that, because the Christian missionary movement achieved the final victory over heathen religions—even those of the Greeks and Romans who were in certain aspects more civilized than the Jewish Christians—the same success will some day be achieved by Christianity in China. It must not be overlooked that the Bible was not protected nor accompanied by the sword in the early Christian era and that our standard of estimation can be "affirmatively" applied to the early Christian missionary enterprise which had unconditionally stood for the cause of the Gospel until finally Christianity was sanctioned as the state religion of Rome by Emperor Constantine the Great. Moreover, it is indisputable to the Chinese as well as to other peoples that in its cultural vitality Christianity was Hellenized by the Greeks, Romanized by the Latins, and Germanized by the Teutonic followers of Martin Luther and John Calvin. In order to obtain in the religious life of the Chinese people, Christianity must be adapted to the Chinese society, and harmonized with the traditional Chinese thought. Anything foreign ever introduced into China, whether Christianity or Bolshevism or Buddhism or Militarism, if the Chinese come to regard it as inadaptable to their social structure, unprofitable to their own culture, and unacceptable to the people, is fated to be wiped out from the Chinese mind and soil. Just as the Chinese people as a whole take it as their duty to work out their own way of salvation so as to emerge from the present state of obscurity in the family of nations, the Chinese Christians are striving to adapt Christianity to their society, make it part of the new Chinese culture, and prove its acceptability to their fellow countrymen. They have learned a great

lesson in the history of Chinese religions why among the imported religions in China, Buddhism, in contrast with Mohammedanism, has flourished in harmony with the traditional Chinese thought and why Mazdaism—or religion of Zoroaster—which was introduced into China in the 7th century, disappeared once for all in the 9th century. They have come to realize that Christianity, in order to establish itself permanently in China, must be assimilated and adopted by Chinese culture as one of its ingredients.

It remains a debatable problem as to whether Christianity as an imported religion will triumph over all other religions now obtaining among the Chinese as it did among the Greeks and Romans. So far as the Chinese conception of and attitude towards religious life are concerned, it has been admitted traditionally that while religions are many, reason is but one. The common impetus of all religions, in the eyes of the Chinese, is the urgency to practise their respective creeds which are mostly similar to each other. As many popular Chinese are Buddhists and at the same time Confucianists,¹ the possibility of mutual existence and prosperity among different religions has been asserted emphatically. All the existing religions in China, except Mohammedanism, are tolerant of each other, especially among the popular multitudes. Christianity will possibly prosper hereafter as a religion among the Chinese, and its possibility of prosperity all depends upon the effort which Chinese Christian leaders are devoting or going to devote to the process of religious harmonization and social adjustment. The traditional Chinese conception of and attitude towards religious life, as already mentioned, seem to have much effect upon the Chinese Christians. As a result, there is little or no hidden enmity between Protestants and Catholics nor any sort of interdenominational antagonism. On account of their mutual convenience and lack of funds different denominations very frequently have to cooperate in supporting schools and hospitals. One thing further attracting our attention is that both Buddhism and Confucianism, owing to the impact of Christianity, have carefully reconsidered themselves and willingly derived many institutional forms from Christianity.²

As to the intelligentsia among Christian Chinese, they are primarily interested in the interpretation of the social and ethical teachings propounded by Jesus Christ in the light of the traditional Chinese thought as well as in the propagation and fulfillment of them. Such speculative problems as to whether the Children of Israel could blow up with horns the city of Jericho or whether the Virgin Birth of the Lord was real, appeal to them just as the problem of the square root of minus one does. What they essentially want to advocate is the practice of the creed and morals of Christian religion. Their conception of and attitude towards religious life are thus both indigenous and idiosyncratic. Such being the case, it is altogether fitting that there

1. Let us arbitrarily coordinate Confucianism with Buddhism, although many writers deny it to be a religion.

2. For instance, the Buddhists and the Confucianists have organized their respective Y. M. B. A. and Y. M. C. A.

arose and has been going on a movement for the establishment of an indigenous Church in China—self-governing, self-supporting, and self-propagating—whose profound ideal will sooner or later be realized, as has been eagerly hoped.



